

CURRENT TOPICS

ATTENTION IS called to "eight pernicious words" by the New York World in this way: "There are eight words in the corporation tax bill as passed by the senate which are hostile in every respect to the spirit of American institutions. These words are: 'Except upon the special direction of the president.' They appear in section seven of the bill, which makes it a misdemeanor for any agent of the government to divulge 'in any manner whatever not provided by law' any information obtained by him in the discharge of his official duties in examining the books of corporations subject to this excise tax. But what is a crime for a minor official of the government to do is legal if done by the president of the United States!"

THE NEBRASKA supreme court has rendered a decision, declaring the Donahoe non-partisan judiciary election law invalid. This law prohibited political parties from nominating candidates for judges of the supreme court, judges of the district court, regents of the state university, county judges, or county superintendent of schools. Candidates for such offices were to be nominated by petition and their names were to appear on the ballot without political designation. The republican state central committee caused the law to be contested and of the five supreme court judges, who passed upon the law, three are candidates for re-election. The chief objection of the court was to the provision requiring 5,000 names to be on a petition for judge, not more than 500 of which could come from one county. They declared that it was a hindrance to the free exercise of the franchise and was repugnant to the constitution of the state. The entire court declared the provision denying the right of party conventions to indorse candidates for the offices affected by the act was without force and void.

GOVERNOR SHAFROTH of Colorado has written for the New York Independent an article, relating to Colorado's new campaign expense law. The governor says: "On the 26th day of July, 1909, in the state of Colorado, there will come into effect a law passed by the last general assembly which provides that campaign expenses can only be paid by the state and the candidates for the various state and county offices. The amount payable out of the state treasury is a sum equal to 25 cents for each vote cast at the last preceding election for governor. The sum for each political party is paid to the state chairman thereof. The amount is limited not to exceed 40 per cent of the first year's salary for which the candidate aspires. It makes it a felony for any person or corporation other than above indicated to contribute any money or property whatsoever to a candidate or political committee or member thereof, and also for any candidate or political committee or member thereof to receive any contribution. Colorado is the first state in the union to enact such a law, and I have the highest hopes of success for this reform measure. In my judgment there is no way of preventing the pernicious influence of corporations in politics except by pronouncing such contributions bribery, and punishing the giver and receiver of such contribution by fine or imprisonment in the penitentiary."

THE WASHINGTON correspondent for the Sioux City (Iowa) Journal (republican) makes this reference to the two Nebraska senators: "Burkett of Nebraska outdid even Crawford of South Dakota in his zeal to follow the lead of the finance committee on numerous roll calls, and then sought to cover up his tracks by voting against the bill. The Congressional Record shows, however, that Burkett voted against any further reduction in the finance committee's or Dingley rates on these products: Lead ore, earthenware, farm implements and tools, razors, scissors, umbrella ribs, printing presses, sewing machines, typewriters, engines, sugar, barley, meats, gloves, hosiery, works of art, hides, boots and shoes, iron and steel, wire

nails, iron ties for cotton bales, school books, salt, tobacco and window glass. He also voted against the income tax and for the corporation tax. Brown, the colleague of Burkett, did not go quite the same length in opposing the extreme tariff rippers, but he did add lemons to the list of items on which the senate voted to increase even the Dingley rate. Brown also voted for the finance committee's or the Dingley rates on lead ore, earthenware, farm implements and tools, typewriters, scissors, sugar, gloves, hosiery, barley, hides, works of art, school books, tobacco, asphalt and window glass. He opposed the income tax, though having offered a constitutional amendment for its ultimate adoption, voting in the meanwhile with Aldrich for a corporation tax."

A CITIZEN OF Boston writes to the New York Evening Post to say: "What could be more amusing than this display of apparent indignation on the part of Senators Depew and Aldrich over the alleged interference of Germany with the noble tariff policy of the United States? One who is at all familiar with the reports of the chambers of commerce of Germany knows that they are productions of remarkable ability, based upon a careful study of conditions, and published for the information of all interested. They are not partisan and interested documents, such as Aldrich and Depew tied on, but scientific studies prepared by experts, and the results of a combination of studies, and, therefore, are usually unsigned. To raise the charge of being 'anonymous' and hold it up to their discredit, is rank ignorance, and to reject them is to exhibit a pitiful narrowness entirely unsuited to the thirst for information that should characterize the framer of a tariff schedule. The entire exhibition was childish, and better calculated to make us blush for the attitude of our senators than to recognize so much as a grain of truth in their cry against foreign interference. The information offered was of a very high quality, much better than the reports of our consuls on industrial conditions in their districts when a new tariff law is contemplated; and was rendered by the department of state in full sincerity. It marks one more phase in this truly 'American system,' where a greedy domestic manufacturer is permitted to write the schedule of duties affecting his product, but the offer of information from any source tending to reduce his claim is flung out as an interference, something to be resented, and it will ever be so while tariffs are framed as they now are."

CONSIDERABLE light is thrown into a dark place of the tariff discussion by the following editorial which appeared in the Omaha World-Herald: "In view of the vociferous claims of the republican organs in this state that Senators Burkett and Brown are entitled to the lion's share of the credit for securing a heavy tariff on barley, it is interesting to note that the interest they served was the brewers of the west and northwest. A Washington dispatch says: 'New York state wished barley and malt at a cheaper rate than she might compete with the malsters of the west and northwest in the general trade of beer. A tariff that would permit the importation of Canadian barley would interfere with the northwestern brewers. Senator Aldrich remained firm with the Minneapolis, St. Louis, Chicago and Milwaukee brewers. Their great force of lobbyists that has been here for months was today in ecstasy. In 1897, when the duty was 30 per cent ad valorem, the United States imported 1,254,968 bushels of barley. At 40 cents price, that meant a tariff of 12 cents a bushel. The duty was raised under the Dingley act to 30 cents a bushel, and in the year following we imported but 10,220 bushels. The present rate is almost prohibitive.' This is indeed a 'glorious victory' for Senators Burkett and Brown, fighting under the Aldrich banner, to win for their Nebraska constituents! That they assisted, by their efforts and their votes, to put the great force of brewery lobbyists that has been for months in Washington, fighting for this tariff, 'in ecstasy,' is a great achievement

But what of the consumers? Is there still to be nothing for them? It goes without saying that Nebraska is thankful for what her senators have been able to do in the way of high tariffs for the beef trust and the brewers—but there are people in Nebraska besides these. People who are interested in low tariffs on clothing, hats, caps, boots and shoes, hosiery and gloves, implements and machinery, sugar and salt, coal and iron and steel and a thousand other things. Are Senators Brown and Burkett so busy serving the brewers and the beef trust they can do nothing for the plain people, who feel the heavy hand of tariff taxation laid upon them every time they spend a dollar in a Nebraska store?"

HERE IS A republican newspaper's (the Chicago Inter Ocean) opinion of the republican tariff making: "The most surprising feature of the present tariff situation in congress is the graceless facility with which certain republican senators are turning their coats. These gentlemen seem to think a party pledge is not binding—is not even serious enough to be explained when violated. By many republican newspapers—the Inter Ocean among them—the policy of tariff revision downward was accepted last year without enthusiasm. But having accepted it, the republican press, without important exception, stands by it and urges that the party now show its good faith. On the other hand senators who either hastened to approve a tariff reduction policy or were blandly acquiescent to it last year are now urging a tariff 'adjustment' rather than a 'reduction,' and are pleading, even tearfully, against any lowering of the tariff for industries in which they happen to be sectionally or personally interested. Because they may not have given a personal pledge under hand and seal and had it irrevocably recorded in cold type, these persons seem to think themselves under no obligation of party or personal honor. What their conception of party and personal honor may be it is difficult for the average republican to understand. It is certainly not the conception of the republican press. There are difficulties in tariff revision downward. These are due to the state of business and the condition of the treasury. But having promised to take the dose, the republican senators in Washington are obligated not now to reject it. Let us take our medicine. Sugarcoat the pill with an inheritance or income tax or stamp taxes, or what we will, but let us take our medicine and not expose ourselves to the charge of broken promises and violated honor. In this case all republicans in congress will do well to follow the example of the republican press which took the pledges of 1908 as irrevocable and stands by them now as then."

LOST—THREE LITTLE WORDS, "REVISE," "Unequivocally" and "Immediately." If found please return to the last republican national platform.

BUNKOED
The ultimate consumer has been bun-
ked by the republican party in con-
gress. Seventy-five per cent of the ex-
isting rates stand without change in the
bills recently passed by the house of rep-
resentatives and reported to the senate
by the committee of the whole of that
body. Of the remainder it is conser-
vatively estimated that fifteen per cent
is raised and slightly under ten per cent
reduced. The average rate of duties is
higher in the house bill than in the
Dingley law and will be even higher in
the senate bill.—Washington Dispatch to
Chicago Tribune (Rep.)

Who says Nebraska is not in the tariff fight? Even the republican senators from Nebraska can tell the difference between an upward revision and a downward revision.